

**City of Lafayette**  
*News for Immediate Release*

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**Rain Gardens in Your Landscape...and Great for the Environment**  
**Attend a Workshop on June 30<sup>th</sup> to Learn More**

Homeowners can have a big impact on water quality by installing a pleasing landscape feature that also helps the environment. Tests show that water draining off lawns, sidewalks, driveways, parking lots and streets carries significant amounts of pollution like fertilizers, motor oil, litter, pesticides, animal waste and many other contaminants. These usually flow directly to streams through natural waterways or into storm sewers. The result is degraded water quality and negative impacts on aquatic plants and animals. Another major impact is increased costs for treating community water supplies.

A rain garden is a great way for homeowners to help do their part. Basically, it involves digging a shallow, saucer-shaped depression near a building downspout, driveway or parking lot, that will temporarily hold rainwater, and then slowly release it into the soil within 24 hours. They are planted with deep-rooted native wildflowers and grasses because they don't require fertilizer and are more tolerant of local climate, soil, and water conditions, plus they take in a large amount of water.



“Rain gardens help to lower the impact of the impervious surfaces, thus reducing the polluted runoff and helping to replenish the ground water supply” says Dan Dunten, Urban Conservationist with the Tippecanoe Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD).

“We are pilot testing an incentive program this spring with some homeowners who live within the city limits of Lafayette and West Lafayette,” says Crystal Joshua, City of Lafayette. “Through a Clean Water Indiana grant and additional financial support from the cities of Lafayette and West Lafayette, as well as the Tippecanoe SWCD, a 50-50 cost-share program has been established. The first 60 city residence who attend one of the special workshops and install a rain garden this spring or summer may qualify to receive up to a maximum of \$150. All the details will be explained at the workshop.”

To learn more about installing your own rain garden and the cost-share program, please plan to attend a workshop on Wednesday, June 30 2010, from 7:00-8:30 p.m. in the Lilly Nature Center at the Celery Bog Nature Area on Lindberg Road in West Lafayette. This workshop is a cooperative effort of the Tippecanoe Soil & Water Conservation District and the Cities of Lafayette and West Lafayette. Even if you don't live in one of the cities, you are still welcome to come and learn about rain gardens.